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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

FULL OF LAUGHTER

Very full of laughter is the old man.
The air is full of wings
Of the little birds of laughter,
Which the old man flings
From his mouth up to the rafter
In the white-washed ceiling
That vibrates with his laughter
And quivers and sings;
Till the little birds come stealing
To the lips whence they came,
And you only hear the laughter
In the shaking of the flame,
In the tapping of the leaves,
And you only hear the laughter
Very faintly if at all;
Until, as you drowse, suddenly, once more,
He awakes with a roar,
And the laughter goes flapping from the ceiling to the wall.
Very full of laughter is the old man.

Very full of laughter is the old man? . . .
I know not what I say,
I mistrust what I hear.
There's an evil tongue licking where the log-fires play,
The round cat heaves with a laughter and a fear.
There are wells lying deeper

Louis Golding

Than the laughter in his eyes,
There are glooms lying deeper
Than the lost lands of the sleeper,
There are sounds behind the laughter
Which I dare not follow after,
There's a choked heart tolling and a dumb child cries.
There's an old mouth full of laughter,
But a dumb heart cries.

Louis Golding

SYNCRASY

I am a reed
Wind-throated and rain-tuned.
You are the player,
Wise as the world.

What will you blow through me, Softmouth?
What sorrows must I echo
From your honied lips
To learn the sweetness of pain?
What lachrymations must I silver
To learn the bitterness of love?

I am a reed
Waiting and silent.
You are the player,
Searching your heart.

A. A. Rosenthal